

# Illinois Commerce Commission Annual Supplier Diversity Policy Session



**Nakhia C. Morrisette**

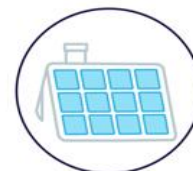
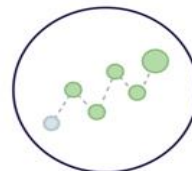
**Regulatory Counsel & Midwest Director, State Affairs**

# Agenda

- SEIA Overview
  - About SEIA
  - Sustainability
  - Diversity & Inclusion
  - Low-Moderate Income Solar Principles
  - SEIA Solar Business Code
- Diversity, Inclusion & Community Engagement Efforts
  - SEIA's Resources and Work
- Supplier Diversity in Illinois
  - Key Dates
  - Preparing for 2020
- Q&A

September 4, 2019

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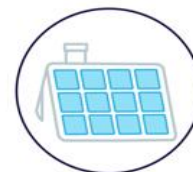
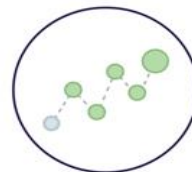


# SEIA Overview

- The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA®) is the national trade association of the U.S. solar energy industry, which now employs more than 250,000 Americans.
- We represent all organizations that promote, manufacture, install and support the development of solar energy.
- SEIA works with its 1,000 member companies to build jobs and diversity, champion the use of cost-competitive solar in America, remove market barriers and educate the public on the benefits of solar energy.

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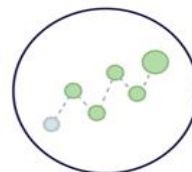


# SEIA Overview

- **SEIA Values Sustainability**
  - In all that we do, SEIA strives to strike a balance between environmental, human, and economic development needs in order to create a more resilient organization that supports a strong solar industry. We achieve this by encouraging our staff to consciously choose viable, more sustainable alternatives at work and at home. SEIA promotes sustainability through its organizational policies and initiatives that focus on responsible sourcing, resource efficiencies, health and wellness, and eco-friendly consumption and disposal practices. We represent all organizations that promote, manufacture, install and support the development of solar energy.
- **Diversity & Inclusion**
  - SEIA values diversity, inclusion and equity within our organization and the promotion of these values across the solar industry. We believe that a diverse workforce creates a more resilient organization that supports a strong, equitable solar industry. SEIA envisions an industry that is committed to fostering a culture of inclusivity. We aim to achieve this by encouraging openness and transparency about diversity issues and progress. We will develop strategies, programs, and tools that seek to equalize opportunities within SEIA and allow for discussing and sharing best practices within the solar industry.
  - We define diversity to include — but not be limited to — difference by race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, culture, ability, class, employment level, and political identity. SEIA's definition of diversity is evolving and subject to expansion.
- **Low-Moderate Income Solar Principles**
  - As the national solar trade association, SEIA encourages solutions to maximize access to solar energy to ALL families and communities. Historically, access to solar energy has been more difficult for Low-Moderate Income (LMI) households due, potentially, to a range of factors such as lack of home ownership, limited credit history, or poor credit. To allow broader access to the benefits of clean, affordable solar energy, SEIA has developed principles for our membership, policymakers, and other stakeholders in the solar economy.
- **SEIA Solar Business Code**
  - Working with our member companies and other stakeholders, SEIA has developed a Solar Business Code that our members must follow.
  - As part of SEIA's consumer protection efforts, SEIA has developed the Complaint Resolution Process for the SEIA Solar Business Code, which is designed to resolve complaints regarding violations of the SEIA Solar Business Code. SEIA is now accepting complaint submissions from the public, along with supporting documents, for review by SEIA and its Resolution Panels.

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A photograph of two workers in blue shirts and hard hats installing a large solar panel on a roof. The workers are using ropes to lift the panel. The background shows trees and a clear sky. The image has a blue and yellow color overlay.

# Diversity, Inclusion & Community Engagement Efforts

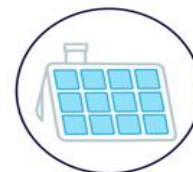
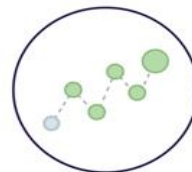
SEIA's Resources and Work





# SEIA Resources for Member Companies

- Guest Speakers & Case Studies: On a monthly basis, guest speakers are invited to join our Community Engagement working group to discuss their programs and opportunities for SEIA member-companies to engage with them. Topics vary widely – from hiring to apprenticeship programs, charity installs and more. Information collected from the speakers is then formatted into miniature case studies for our database.
- Supplier Diversity Map: We have collected each state's supplier diversity, minority business or other relevant resources, and created a master-spreadsheet of these items for our members to use. This content is being reformatted into an interactive map which will be accessible to members on our website.

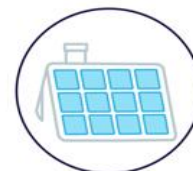
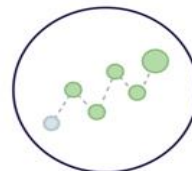


# SEIA Resources for Member Companies

- SEIA Webinar series on D&I - SEIA launched a Diversity and Inclusion Webinar Series in January 2019, which occurs every other month (free for SEIA members, small fee for non-members). Topics include:
  - Implementing a D&I initiative at your company
  - Paid Leave
  - Hiring formerly incarcerated individuals
  - Recruiting from HBCUs
  - Hiring Veterans
  - Unconscious Bias Training
- SEIA funded the first industry-wide Diversity Study (2017), and helped fund the next iteration of the report (2019). This report allows us to track progress, as well as identify additional areas where SEIA can develop resources to assist our members.

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# SEIA's Direct Work

- SEIA LMI policy factsheet/principles document
  - SEIA pledges to educate and promote its membership regarding innovations and policies that may facilitate broadening LMI participation in the solar economy.
  - SEIA pledges that when advocating for a solar program, there should be a low-income component of that program.
  - SEIA pledges, to the extent practicable, to include diverse voices in decision-making processes and collaborate with diverse communities when pursuing action in state legislatures, public utility commissions, zoning boards, etc.
- SEIA Women's Empowerment Summits
  - The SEIA Women's Empowerment Summits aims to educate, facilitate connections, and provide thought leadership in the solar industry. At the end of the events, participants will have an action plan with ideas to start implementing positive changes at their organizations.

## Low-Moderate Income Solar Principles



### SEIA's Commitment to Inclusive Solar Policies

#### History

As the national solar trade association, SEIA encourages solutions to maximize access to solar energy to ALL families and communities. Historically, access to solar energy has been more difficult for Low-Moderate Income (LMI) households due, potentially, to a range of factors such as lack of home ownership, limited credit history, or poor credit. To allow broader access to the benefits of clean, affordable solar energy, SEIA offers the following principles for our membership, policymakers, and other stakeholders in the solar economy.

#### Our Pledges

SEIA pledges to educate and promote its membership regarding innovations and policies that may facilitate broadening LMI participation in the solar economy.

SEIA pledges that when advocating for a solar program, there should be a low-income component of that program. Low-income solar programs and policies should be additive to existing renewable energy and energy efficiency programs, not undermine or replace them. Low-income solar programs should use existing outreach and programs to the maximum extent to build upon existing successful approaches.

SEIA pledges, to the extent practicable, to include diverse voices in decision-making processes and collaborate with diverse communities when pursuing action in state legislatures, public utility commissions, zoning boards, etc.

#### Suggestions

For program administrators to successfully implement and manage LMI-focused programs:

##### 1) Education

Provide more education and data about solar benefits to lower-income communities to policy makers, as well as customers. Show the risks and benefits for low-income communities and communities of color, with visible examples.

##### 2) Partner with Community Organizations

A successful program requires collaboration with local partners such as faith-based organizations, civic associations, community development corporations, housing organizations or other service providers to ensure that community needs and challenges are addressed and assets utilized. Putting communities at the center ensures that programs are responsive and effective and helps maximize participation.

##### 3) Real Benefits

A successful low-income program must be designed to bring benefits directly to the low-income customer. Ideally, the participant would see a positive cash flow from day one.

##### 4) Sustainability and Flexibility

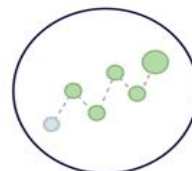
A successful low-income solar program must encourage long-term market development and be flexible in order to evolve to best serve the unique low-income market segment over time and as conditions and circumstances change. This requires that programs should have regular evaluation to determine effectiveness.

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2018

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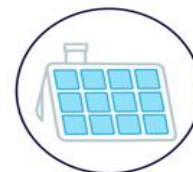
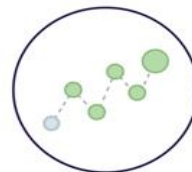


# SEIA's Direct Work

- Historically Black Colleges Community Development Initiative:
  - SEIA signed a MOU with this organization to create career pathways from HBCUs, community colleges, and training programs to solar companies.
- NAACP Solar Equity Initiative Partner:
  - The Solar Equity Initiative is a project of [NAACP's Environmental and Climate Justice Program](#) and advances the following NAACP's civil rights programs: economic development, labor, education, health and criminal justice.
  - The year-long project works to:
    - Provide solar job skills training to 100 individuals
    - Coordinate the installation of solar panels on 20 households and 10 community centers
    - Strengthen equity in solar access policies in at least 5 states across the country
- Abby Hopper, SEIA's CEO, signed the CEO Action Pledge for Diversity & Inclusion
  - CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion is the largest CEO-driven business commitment to advance diversity and inclusion within the workplace.

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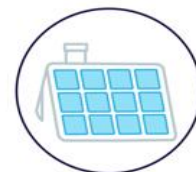
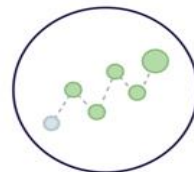
# SEIA's Direct Work

The launch of SEIA's #DiversityChallenge resulted in close to 80 companies committing to sign the CEO Action Pledge for Diversity and Inclusion, ~100 attendees at an in-person roundtable, engagement from major energy trade groups, and significant participation on social media by energy companies (613 tweets, 6.5 million potential impressions, 944.1k potential individuals reached).



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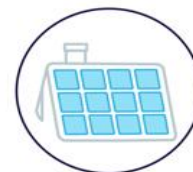
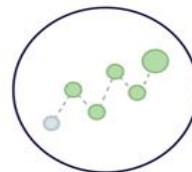
# SEIA's Direct Work

- The Solar Training Network, a program funded by the U.S. Department of Energy's SunShot Initiative and implemented by the Solar Foundation, is a resource for solar job seekers, training providers and employers to connect and grow the solar workforce. SEIA is a partner of this initiative.
- Job/career fairs: SEIA has both hosted and supported various job and career fairs across the U.S.



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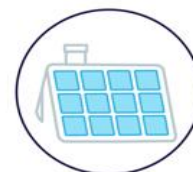
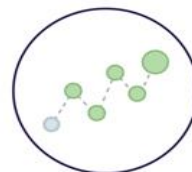


# SEIA's Direct Work

- Incorporating content into our events and trade shows (below is a non-exhaustive list of education from SPI 2018 that is directly linked to our work in this space):
  - **Community Partners Coffee Break**  
Expanding and diversifying your networks is a key strategy to creating a more diverse and inclusive solar workforce and a stronger solar business. Stop by the Industry Trends Stage for a cup of coffee and mingling with hiring managers and diverse constituencies to expand networks and encourage opportunities. Then make sure to stick around for SEIA's show floor session called Why Diversity is Critical for Solar Businesses and How to be an Ally, taking place immediately afterwards.
  - **Why is Diversity, Inclusion, and Allyship Critical for the Solar Industry?**  
Join us for this education session! Companies in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are 35 percent more likely to have financial returns above their respective national industry medians. Additionally, companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 15 percent more likely to have financial returns above their respective national industry medians. The panel will focus on delving into the essential, data-and-business-driven motivations for hiring more women, people of color, and underrepresented groups. Further, the panel will present ideas on how anyone can be an ally.
  - **The Next Big Market: Engaging Low & Moderate-Income Communities**  
A recent NREL study suggests there is a potential to add 320 GW of rooftop solar on low and moderate-income housing -- a massive business opportunity for the solar industry. This session will investigate the challenges that stand in the way of deployment, outline new, innovative solutions such as community solar that can expedite access to this market, and feature an interactive discussion of lessons learned from early entrants.
  - **Professional Women in Solar & Storage Luncheon**  
In this uniquely formatted luncheon, attendees will connect with solar and storage professionals from across the globe in an interactive experience that spurs discussion among today's leaders on how to effectively do business and advance their careers. Hear from a leading executive professional development coach and a couple of top industry executives as they share five focus areas that have influenced the ascent of their careers.

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A photograph of two solar installers on a roof. They are wearing blue shirts, khaki pants, and white hard hats. They are holding a large solar panel. The background shows a residential roof with a chimney and some trees. The image has a blue and yellow color overlay.

# Supplier Diversity in Illinois

Newly Reporting Solar Entities



# Key Dates

**December 2016:** Future Energy Jobs Act signed (SB 2814)

**June 2017:** FEJA enacted

**June 2017 – March 2018:** Stakeholder, ICC process for Long-Term Renewables Resources Procurement Plan

**April 3, 2018:** Final Order approving the IPA's Long-Term Plan

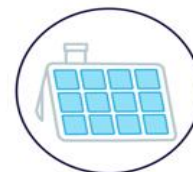
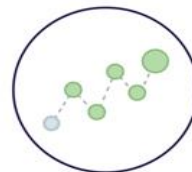
**June 2018 – February 2019:** Program admin stakeholder process

**April 10, 2019:** Adjustable Block Program Lottery occurs

**May 2019 - October 2020:** Projects begin to come online

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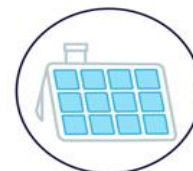
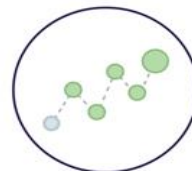
# Preparing for 2020

SEIA plans to continue to be a resource to its members by:

- Amplifying to the solar community that this requirement exists
- Providing resources to locate diverse suppliers and specifically track state-specific supplier diversity spend
- Working with the ICC to ensure clearly defined parameters for the industry (e.g., how does the ICC define solar energy “supplier”?)

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# Any Questions?

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